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ABSTRACT

This paper is an overview of 64 documents on multicultural education policies from various Australian state education bodies during the period 1979 to 1985. In comparisons between states and across time, these policies are marked by inconsistency in form, scope, status, and content. States vary considerably on: (1) whether English as a second language (ESL) is part of multicultural education or an independent field; (2) the purposes of bilingual education and second language learning; (3) the role of ethnic schools; and (4) approaches to sociocultural education. Nevertheless, important trends are worthy of note. Institutionally, the multicultural education movement developed as a result of initiatives from Canberra, and policy statements began emerging in the late 1970s as part of the administration of tied federal funding. Across all policies, there have been moves toward concepts of mainstreaming: (1) influencing mainstream teachers about the ESL needs of their non-English-speaking students; (2) broadening the concept of community languages to encompass all languages other than English so that they gain equal curricular importance; and (3) establishing multiculturalism as an ethic that crosses the school, combatting racism at both structural and attitudinal levels. However, equivocation in policy language and reports of actual practice suggest that the mainstream has hardly been affected. Mainstreaming is now the key word of policy and debate. (SV)

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NACCME COMMISSIONED RESEARCH PAPER NO 6

A Review of Australian Multicultural Education Policy 1979 - 1986

by

Caroline Alcorso and Bill Cope

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NACCME COMMISSIONED RESEARCH PAPER NO. 6

A REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY 1979 - 1986.

BY

CAROLINE ALCORSO AND BILL COPE

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NATIONAL ADVISORY AND CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE ON MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

PREFACE

The National Advisory and Co-ordinating Committee on Multicultural Education (NACCME) was established by the Minister for Education (and Youth Affairs), Senator Susan Ryan, on 27 March 1984, following from the Government's acceptance of Recommendation 29 of the Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs Evaluation of Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants (May 1985).

NACCME's Terms of Reference are to:

(i) advise the Minister for Education on matters relating to multicultural education;

(ii) co-ordinate, monitor and review multicultural programs and activities;

(iii) determine an appropriate procedure for information exchange and put that procedure into practice.

NACCME's main function is to provide advice on the needs of multicultural education across a broad spectrum, from pre-school to higher education and information education mechanisms such as the media. The Commonwealth Department of Education provides the Secretariat for the Committee.

At its inaugural meeting, Senator Ryan suggested that the Committee develop a major policy document on multicultural education, and this was taken up as a major task for NACCME over the past three years. On 26 May 1987 NACCME's policy document Education In and For a Multicultural Society: Issues and Strategies for Policy Making was officially launched.

In developing this major policy document NACCME sought input from outside experts by commissioning a number of background research papers.

NACCME is pleased to now release a series of seven papers comprising eight commissioned research papers which had direct input into our own document.

We hope that these papers will add to the pool of information available on, and constructive discussion of, issues in multicultural education.

The views expressed in these papers are not necessarily those of NACCME itself.

This paper entitled A Review of Australian Multicultural Education Policy 1979-1986 is by Caroline Alcorso and Bill Cope, who are Research Fellows, at the Centre for Multicultural Studies, University of Wollongong.

This is the sixth paper in the NACCME Commissioned Research Papers Series.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

NACCME asked the authors to prepare a paper which:

- reviews State-level developments in Multicultural Education Policy covering the period 1979-86. This should relate primarily to State initiatives at a policy level but include key and significant practical developments. The paper should be descriptive and not an analytical critique. The length should not exceed 6000-7000 words and should be documented.

The paper was completed for NACCME in December 1986.

A REVIEW OF AUSTRALIAN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION POLICY 1979-1986

A paper prepared for the National Advisory and Coordinating Committee on Multicultural Education by Bill Cope and Caroline Alcorso.

December 1986.

The following text is an overview of the multicultural education policies of the various state education bodies in Australia from the period 1979-85. The bibliography at the end of this paper lists the relevant documents.

Understanding the term 'policy' broadly, the documents under consideration vary greatly in form, scope, status and content. Some are lengthy documents, with considerable space given to background and rationale; others (such as the N.T. Departmental Policy) are simply brief statements of general principles. The scope of the document varies: different areas of the educational system is addressed in each state. For example S.A.'s Working Party Report 'Education for a Cultural Democracy' covers not only primary and secondary schools but ethnic schools, tertiary institutions, preschool education and the media. At the other end of the spectrum is Queensland's languages policy which is concerned with providing 'broad guidelines for teachers in schools seeking funding for LOTE programs through the Grant Scheme offered by the Queensland Multicultural Co-ordinating Committee'.

There is no comparability in the content of policy documents, either in terms of the number of issues covered (for example teacher development is dealt with in approximately half the policies) or the depth and detail with which issues are dealt.

Not all major education bodies have policies that are current and available. Not all are of the same vintage. Some didn't develop policy until recently. Some have not yet replaced out-dated policy. For example, the South Australian Department of Education is in the process of replacing its 1982 policy statement 'Diversity and Cohesion' with a new policy on multiculturalism in education. Finally, the status of documents varies. Some policies are mandatory guiding statements and teachers can be inspected on their implementation for promotion purposes. (e.g. the NSW Department of Education Multicultural Education Policy.) Others are simply funding guidelines. Others again are advisory or support documents.

These inconsistencies reflect some salient points in the history of the multicultural education development in Australia. The diffusion of multicultural education policy has not been systematic. Its origins have been in Canberra with reports from the Commonwealth Schools Commission and other Government bodies; but these have provided an influential, rather than directive basis for the

formulation of State and Territory policies. Moreover, the rise of multicultural education has been related (in complex ways) to ethnic community politics whose form and strength has varied from State to State. In N.S.W., for example, the Department's 1983 policy and support documents reflect the pressure for mother tongue maintenance programs and community language teaching from organisations such as the Ethnic Communities Council and must be understood in the context of ethnic community demands for participation in policy formulation and implementation at many levels. In other states (for example Tasmania) this type of involvement has taken a different form and post-arrival services have been emphasised.

Thus policy development is not uniform from State to State and has been undertaken by a number of different types of organisations with different structures and aims. National immigration policies have resulted in ethnically similar populations in major Australian cities across Australia; the educational needs of NESB students are similar; and the shift from assimilationist to culturally plural social policy has occurred nationally. However, comparing State policies remains a problematic exercise because of the complexity and diversity of bureaucratic responses to these common experiences.

For this reason, an issue-based approach to the discussion of policy documents will be adopted. Here we will be less concerned with policy differences between states than the general issues at stake in all states. The history of policies in terms of post-Galbally multiculturalism and Federal funding of multicultural education initiatives makes this possible because it has resulted in substantive similarities despite the differences outlined above.

Obviously, there are a variety of ways of categorising the issues. We have adopted a categorisation that is broad and general since it is rare to find clear or recurring demarcations across the policies:

English Language Learning
Learning Community Languages
Socio Cultural Education

Other categorisations are frequently made in policy documents. Specialist ESL is a clear area of need delineated in all the policies, although in some policies (as in Commonwealth funding practices) English Language Teaching across the

curriculum is sometimes treated as a separate area. 'Community' languages appears as a category in most policies, though in some the distinction between these and traditional 'foreign' languages is not made and both are included in the category 'Languages other than English'.

Within socio-cultural policy the division of 'ethnic studies' (study of the culture of a particular ethnic group), 'education for intercultural understanding' (strategies for promoting tolerance of other cultures) and 'multicultural perspectives to the curriculum' (infusing the facts and issues of multicultural Australia into all areas of the curriculum) recur with some frequency (e.g. NSW Department of Education Policy, 1983.) However, the divisions are not clear or consistent and ultimately the categorisation that seemed most useful was simply the broad one of socio-cultural education.

English Language Learning

Multicultural education policy is, at a general level, about developing education services that are appropriate to, as well as reflective of a multicultural society. Normative judgments about what children should learn, and in particular which values they should be encouraged to develop, form the rationale for many areas of multicultural education. However, ESL policy is the aspect of multicultural education that is most seen to be directly related to students' educational **needs.** The 'needs basis' of the ESL policies, their clearly defined subjects, as well as their consequent orientation towards equity and access rather than cultural diversity marks out English language learning policies by comparison to other aspects of multicultural education.

There is little disagreement about the general ESL needs of students from State to State. ESL is considered to be essential for participation in school and in the wider Australian society. The following is a selection of major and representative statements.

> The Authority believes that as a priority special assistance must be provided for children of non-English speaking background in order that their lack of fluency in English does not inhibit their ability to realise fully their educational and social potential. (ACT Schools Authority, 1979).
>
> Multicultural education is a significant vehicle for providing educational experience designed to enhance the participation in

> society of all children in Australia. Multicultural education is thus an acknowledgement of the Government's commitment to assist children to gain access to society's resources through fluency in English ... (NSW Department of Education, (1983a:2)
>
> [A]ll young people should experience the following comprehensive range of studies and activities ... - listen and talk appropriately in a variety of situations and to read and write effectively in standard English as it is used in Australia (Victorian Education Department, 1984;17)
>
> English is the language of participation in public life and of inter-group relations in the linguistically and culturally diverse society of Australia. Some people have English as their mother tongue and some come to English having first acquired another language. Regardless of whether individuals speak English as their first of second language, they should have the right to access of the highest levels of communicative competence in English if Australia is to be a truly egalitarian society. Since education provides knowledge and access to society, and is itself part of public life, it is the responsibility of schools to ensure the development of English language competence in all students. (Victorian Department of Education, 1984:1)
>
> A major purpose of all teaching is to assist individual children to reach their full potential. However, this is particularly difficult to achieve when the language used in teaching is not the language of the home. The main purpose of Child Migrant Education (funded through the Schools Commission) to provide English as a Second Language (ESL) assistance to children from non-English speaking backgrounds, which includes: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students who speak an Aboriginal language or Creole as their first language. Through the provision of ESL assistance, children acquire skills in the English language which enable them to participate fully in mainstream classes and activities. (W.A. Department of Education, 1983:1)

In every policy document there is at least some reference to the privileged place of the English language in Australian life and the need for schools to develop NESB students' English language skills for the purposes of employment and further study. In fact, there is almost a tacit acknowledgement in the policies that in some ways ESL teaching sits more easily with old assimilationist goals than with the 'diversity-of-values' orientation of some versions of multiculturalism. The orientation of ESL is fundamentally to participation in the mainstream, while that of other aspects of multicultural education seems often to be the respect and maintenance of cultural and linguistic differences.

In particular, the recognition of the social primacy of the English language is

not immediately compatible with the equality and integrity of all community languages that is declared in other sections of policy documents. Thus tensions permeate many ESL policies and are dealt with in a number of more or less convincing ways, as in the following exerpt from Queensland. Here we see ESL being fitted uneasily into the general section headed 'Language study as part of cultural study and as a study in its own right':

> All Queensland schools have a responsibility to develop English language skills. For many children this involves mother tongue maintenance development. For others whose first language is not English or whose first language is a dialect variant of English the school must provide special programs aimed at Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) or as a Second Dialect (TESD) (Queensland Working Party on Multicultural Education, 1979:17)

English is treated as a community language and English language studies and the study of non-English languages dealt with as items within the same category.

Another aspect of this question which varies from State to State is whether ESL is an aspect of multicultural education or a separate field of endeavour. Historically and institutionally the two have been frequently separate and the old term, 'Child Migrant Education' has survived until recently in Victoria and Western Australia.

An early statement, that of the ACT Schools Authority, operates on the assumption that the areas are relatively separate:

> While accepting the necessity for multicultural education, the ACT Schools Authority notes that English is the major language of communication in Australia and that this situation is likely to continue. (ACT Schools Authority, 1979)

Similarly, Lyn Well's 1980 research report surveying multicultural and migrant education services in ACT schools was divided into two parts: on ESL and multicultural education (Wells, 1980). The 1979 Queensland Department of Education's 'Education for a Multicultural Society' policy includes only minor reference to ESL as an element of multiculturalism in comparison to its coverage of community languages and socio-cultural policy. Nor does the South Australian 'Diversity and Cohesion' document provide detailed rationale for ESL, other than as a balance to diversity. The 1983 South Australian Multicultural Program Policy Statement and guidelines, however, clearly includes ESL as an element of multiculturalism, although the rationales and strategies for ESL are quite

distinct for those for community languages.

The policies can be grouped along a spectrum which moves from ESL as a necessary contribution to effective participation in Australian education and society to ESL as an element in Australian cultural pluralism. In some states, the roots in 'child migrant education' persist such that there is a strong emphasis on the participatory end of the spectrum (for example Western Australia and Queensland). In other states, the spectrum of purposes for ESL is broader. To take New South Wales, for example:

> The general aim of ESL education may be realised through a number of specific aims. These are:
> - to develop students' ability to function effectively in English, in a wide range of situations
> - to develop students' skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing in English and to ensure that these skills are linked to all curriculum areas
> - to facilitate on-going conceptual development while the student has minimal use and understanding of English, to build on the linguistic and cultural identities of students in order to foster the development of their self-esteem
> - to develop ESL programs which are multicultural in perspective across all curriculum areas. (NSW Department of Education, 1983b:2)

The first three of these specific aims relates to social-communicative capacity, functional language usage in school and minimal disruption of lines of cognitive development in moving from L1 in school and/or at home to L2 English in school. These aims need not be aspects of multiculturalism as cultural pluralism, although, of course, they are crucial as elements of multiculturalism as a process of securing social equity. The last two goals, however, are clearly aspects of multiculturalism as cultural pluralism. Under this rationale, ESL can have quite a different objective.

Similarly, in the Tasmanian MECC policy 'Sharing Australian Cultural Values', English language learning appears almost in the socio-cultural category as one of the 'studies of core-values' (an 'Australian core-value') in a category which includes the study of 'identified core values' in other cultures, i.e. 'specific ethnic studies':

The recent draft Victorian policy represents an attempt to incorporate the role of ESL teaching systematically into a multicultural policy. It both acknowledges that students' needs are diverse and that diversified service provision of

'relevant' and 'appropriate education' is necessary to ensure that educational outcomes are equitable and that all students' life-chances are maximised. On the other hand it is recognised that educating people to participate effectively in the mainstream should not involve 'policies and practices based in a particular monocultural view of Australian society'.

As noted above, ESL policies tend to be distinguished in the field of multicultural education by being phrased directly in terms of student needs. Many policy documents go beyond stating these general needs to defining different needs of different categories of students. One mode of categorisation is according to language background, in order to understand the relationship between the structures and forms of L1 and the particular logistics L2 acquisition. This approach, becoming more common in adult ESL teaching, is recognised in W.A.'s Child Migrant Education's provision of 'language roles' describing the structure of nearly twenty languages that are the mother tongues of ESL students in WA. Similarly, the distinction between TESL and TESD noted above in the Queensland report is an acknowledgement of differential student needs relating to language background.

The most common mode of categorisation of learning needs, however, which cuts across different L1 backgrounds, is according to 'phase' or 'stages' of learning. For example:

> STAGE 1
> These children range from those who on entering school have no English, to those whose understanding and production of spoken or written English are obviously limited in all social and educational situations. Some Stage 1 learners will be students who have studies English in their country of origin and whose reading and writing skills have been developed but whose oral skills are weak.
>
> STAGE 2
> These children range from those whose understanding and production of spoken and written English in social and educational situation are enough to begin to participate in and meet the language demands of some class activities to those who can meet the language demands of most class activities.
>
> STAGE 3
> These children seem to be comparable to native speakers in oral proficiency but in fact cannot adequately meet the total language demands of the school program. (Western Australian Department of Education, 1983:1-2)

Some adolescents of non-English speaking background would fit into a first phase

of learning and for many of these students intensive language centres have been set up in some states. Specific needs arising for first phase or stage students would include whether they had substantial formal education in L1, whether they are literate in L1, the structure and pedagogy of the L1 learning situation (which might be relatively similar or very different to the Australian educational environment) and the particular forms and levels of literacy and oracy required in Australian secondary education.

On the other hand, many adolescents of non-English speaking background would be situated in a later phase. Of particular concern could be adolescents whose Australian schooling began at about the same point as their peers of English speaking background, but who, nevertheless, need to be regarded as ESL learners. The policies do not always recognise this as such a pressing area of need. The Draft Discussion Paper of the Victorian TESL Committee points to some of these students' particular needs.

> 4.5 Non-English speaking background students with previous schooling in Australia. These students are normally orally proficient in English for the usual social purposes but may be:
> * illiterate or semi-literate in their mother tongue. This can partly contribute to literacy problems in English; and/or
> * illiterate or semi-literate in English as evidenced by spelling problems, limited structural control and lack of vocabulary in special subject areas. (These students should not be confused with those in category 4.6)
> * Non-English speaking background students with specific learning difficulties. (Very careful diagnosis is needed here. The 'remedial' label is as dangerous as any other for either non-English speaking background students or English speaking background students). (Victorian Department of Education, 1984)

The issue of English language teaching across the curriculum is regarded in most policies as an aspect of ESL teaching, but it can also be identified as a major issue in multicultural education generally. Institutionally and methodogically, the practices advocated in some policies are different to those of ESL for newly arrived students and these practices are increasingly a matter of scrutiny and debate within the general context of 'mainstreaming' and the effect of this on specialist services. At an institutional level, the responsibilities of all teachers in all curriculum areas as ESL teachers for students of non-English speaking background is emphasised in many of the policies. This area of responsibility is one for teachers in mainstream subject areas and not simply specialist ESL teachers. For example, it is pointed out that some students of

non-English speaking background who entered school in Australia at the same time as their English speaking peers might appear to have equal oral proficiency, but in terms of day-to-day school performance, seem to have lower 'ability'. It is argued that mainstream teachers need to be able to distinguish language proficiency as an element of school performance and recognise their role as language teachers. This type of approach, then involves a somewhat different institutional setting than specialist ESL teaching.

And, at a methodological level, the difference between specialist ESL teaching and language across the curriculum for students of non-English speaking background can be as great as the difference between the methodologies of 'foreign' language teaching and general guidelines (such as those issued in New South Wales) for language across the curriculum.

Specialist ESL teachers are, in many of the policies, given special responsibilities in assessing the language needs of students in particular subject areas and in making mainstream teachers more aware of the linguistic issues. For example, the New South Wales Department of Education Multicultural Policy ESL Support Document points out that:

> The responsibilities of an ESL teacher within the school may include:
> - supporting and instructing students in the English language, which is directly related to and integrated with the content of the subject areas
> - liaising with classroom/subject teachers in developing language across the curriculum programs
> - participating in the development of school based curricula
> - advising classroom/subject teachers on ESL resources
> - contributing expertise to the school's language policy, thus acting as language resource person within the school
> - familiarising staff with ESL methodologies, approaches, and techniques through informal/formal discussions, workshop activities or staff meetings
> - assisting classroom/subject teachers in modifying non-ESL resources to suit the needs of ESL learners (1983b:12)

The Western Australian ESL guidelines point to some of the specific learning needs of 'stage 3' learners and proposes of certain teaching methods such as resource or learn teaching and the consultancy role in the matters such as language across the curriculum to colleagues in the school. Similarly, issues such as teacher development have a specific relevance to language across the curriculum ESL teaching and there has been recognition of this by Commonwealth educational funding through PEP, MECC and DSP for teachers to devise LAC

resource materials.

The New South Wales ESL policy states that language learning cannot be separated effectively into discrete lesson segments and advocates the adoption of a communicative approach to permeate the whole curriculum. However, resource problems are tactily acknowledged where different students needs are identified:

> While the provision of specialist E.S.L. teachers is premised on their assisting students in all of these categories, priority should be given by the specialist E.S.L. teacher to assisting those students within the category of first phase learners. (1983:7)

Similarly, Sue Lock in a Victorian Department of Education document 'Second-language Learners in the Classroom', points out:

> Because there is a continual shortage of trained teachers of English as a second language, those who are available are usually restricted to working in the area of most obvious need - with students who have little or no English. There are however large numbers of students who have progressed beyond the initial stage of learning English and who have developed considerable proficiency in their second language both orally and with reading and writing. While these students may be able to cope with many situations, their knowledge of and fluency in English is insufficient for them to be able to successfully fulfill the demands of the school. These students are usually in mainstream classrooms without any special assistance through often they are found in remedial or 'low-stream' groups. As they move through the schooling system and the language demands become more formal, many of them are left further and further behind ... We know there is an interrelationship between language and thought (even though we do not know exactly how it works) We know language is for thinking and doing, that it has a cognitive function and a social function, both of which are necessary for growth and for learning. Much of our thinking and thus our learning, specially school learning, depends on verbalising thought.(1983: 6-7)

This last quote highlights a crucial element in the need for language teaching across the curriculum and the current state of resourcing.

A discrete area that is identified within many ESL policies is bilingual education. Since bilingual education is by definition a form of education that involves both English language learning and learning in languages other than English where non-native speakers of English are involved it crosses two of our categories: English language learning and learning community languages. In this section we will deal with transitional bilingual programs which in some policies

are identified as a need in students effective movement to the use of English in schooling and in society

The NSW Department of Education s ESL support document outlines a fairly common picture of the traditional bilingual approach, the implicit target of which is early primary level children

> ESL programs and transitional bilingual programs are both responses to the language learning needs of students Transitional bilingual programs seek to ensure, that for children of non-English speaking backgrounds, conceptual development continues without interruption while English is being learnt. To this end, the students first language is used as the primary medium of instruction.
>
> Such a program by building on students' existing strengths and abilities and recognising the students' language and culture may provide greater opportunities for successful learning which may enhance self esteem and confidence.
>
> Over a period English will replace the first language as the medium of instruction. Ideally, a transitional bilingual education program should be followed by an appropriate community language program, thus making provision for continuing first language maintenance. (NSW Department of Education, 1983b:13)

Although the document suggests that, where appropriate, a school may apply for the appointment of a bilingual teacher as part of the school's normal staffing establishment, in practice this has rarely occurred in NSW. The more common means of arranging a situation approaching transitional bilingual education has been through the use by some schools of community language teachers in Team teaching situations and/or the use of bilingual ethnic teachers aides in the classroom.

As described above, bilingual education is dealt with in the NSW policy as a transitional approach in the context of teaching English as a Second Language. Bilingual education does not figure within the NSW Community Languages document except insofar as it is noted that 'schools need to recognise that the provision for community language maintenance will be an ... outcome' of transitional bilingual education programs being run in the school. (NSW Department of Education. 1983c:11) In other States, however, transitional bilingual education is not considered to be oriented explicitly towards English language proficiency, especially where this is considered to be an unacceptably 'assimilationist' goal. Thus in Victoria, bilingual programs are dealt with

typically under the rubic of 'bilingual and community language programs; (as, for example, throughout the Education Department document. 'The implementation of bilingual and community language programs in primary schools' 1985) However, most of the bilingual programs in operation in Victoria (currently about 23-25) are aimed at non-native speakers of English and are at promoting learning in the child's first language whilst he/she is mastering English. Similarly, the new draft Victorian multicultural education policy has clearly recognised the role of transitional programs:

> ... On entering schools, students competent in a language other than English, should wherever possible, be able to continue their conceptual development through their first language while building up linguistic and conceptual skills in English." (Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural and, Migrant Education, 1986)

In other States bilingual education receives only passing attention. The ACT Schools' Authority Policy recognises that 'there is educational and cultural value in giving all children the opportunity to learn a language in addition to English or the mother tongue from the early primary years' and endorses the implementation of a variety of bilingual second language/early start programs where feasible, according to local needs.

In the Northern Territory transitional bilingual education programs have been developed for Aboriginal children from 1973, and have a clear bicultural emphasis. The NT Department Policy on multicultural education mentions bilingual programs in the context of bicultural studies and intercultural education. (Brentnall and Hodge.1984)

As has been pointed at in a recent overview of Australian multicultural education policies, the structural and resourcing difficulties in relation to bilingual education in Australia are significant and decisions made in this area have been highly political. On the whole bilingual education in Australia has not been implemented in a serious or systematic manner and the learning difficulties of NESB adolescent students and areas of need identified by the three 'Campbell Reports' on English language learning in Australia have not been addressed by transitional bilingual programs on other than a one-off basis.

Community Language Learning

The learning of languages other than English has had an important place in the school curriculum (mainly at secondary level) in Australian schools since WWII and in one sense is not exclusively a multicultural education issue. However, since 'multiculturalism' emerged as a policy direction in the late 1970s, the teaching of 'community languages other than the traditional 'foreign' languages such as French and German has been considered to be socially, educationally and politically important. The demands of some ethnic community organisations for the teaching of their mother tongue in schools has been recognised by funded community language programs and by State support for after-hours language classes run by the ethnic communities.

While there is no unanimity of views about what constitutes a community' as opposed to a 'foreign' language, there are very few policies in the 1980s which do not reflect and reproduce this distinction (the 1983 Education Policy of SA and subsequent SA Language Policies are the obvious exceptions as they refer consistently to 'Languages other than English') Community languages are considered to be those spoken as a first language by a minority section of the population in Australia. There remains some definitional disagreements over whether a community language is a language spoken by the (local) school 'community' (as in the NSW policy) or simply by a 'community' in Australia (as in the Commonwealth Schools Commission definition and the Victorian policy.)

The primary school focus of all community language policies, the emphasis on the involvement of the school (or other) minority ethnic communities in programs, and many other aspects of community language policies reflect the relationship of these policies to the struggles and demands of many minority ethnic groups in the 1970s to gain a place in schools for the teaching of their mother tongue languages. Community language' policy is one of the most intensely political and contested areas of multicultural education.

On the whole the State policies tend to focus mainly on providing a rationale, rather than specific or practical guidelines, for 'community languages', and much space is devoted in them to (often fairly general) statements about the benefits of community language teaching. Typically, the arguments are presented in isolation from past or current debates about foreign language teaching (except that it is frequently stated that traditional language teaching has been too narrow) and the relationship between the two is rarely specified. Different institutional arrangements for the provision of 'community' and 'traditional'

language services as well as different teacher recruitment and training practices frequently operate, such as in NSW where separate institutional bodies within the Department of Education administer the two types of language services in State schools. whilst the two types of language services in State schools. Whilst the two types of language services now recognise the role of ethnic, or after-hours schools, and administer both State and Federal funds to ethnic schools, few states have a community language policy that explicitly encompassed them. In most cases policy towards ethnic schools is simply implicit in funding criteria in decisions made by funding committees and in the way the State school system manages the day school - ethnic school relationship. State policies (explicit and implicit) relating to ethnic schools will be dealt with at the end of this section.

State policies usually accept, explicitly or implicitly, the twin guiding principles proposed in 1984 by the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts for the development of a National Language Policy - that is (i) the maintenance and development of languages other than English; (ii) the creation of opportunities for learning a second language (for all children). Most policies argue that there are 'diverse, legitimate and strong reasons' (Victorian State Board of Education, 1985) for community languages. Arguments are related both to 'student needs' and simply to the perceived desirable benefits of community language learning for both the students and the society. Some of the main arguments are listed below and apply equally to community languages generally in both day and ethnic schools.

First, the learning of one's 'community' language is viewed as a means of increasing students' self-esteem. For example:

> For those participating in programs which teach their own native language or the language of their parents and of their primary community, research suggests an increase in self-esteem and in the reassurance which comes from having one's home or community language and culture recognised in such a way. (Queensland Multicultural Co-ordinating Committee, 1985:2)

Second, 'community' language learning is also seen as necessary because the maintenance of languages is considered to be a legitimate right and a way of ensuring the unity of 'ethnic communities' and families. For example:

> Schools can contribute positively to maintaining close familial ties through the development of education programs which recognise and enhance the language and culture of parents from

> non-English speaking backgrounds. When, for example, English is the sole medium of instruction in schools, children from minority groups often have to struggle to avoid developing negative attitudes to themselves and their families. There is even greater potential for conflict between parents and children when they no longer share a common language at home. This is still the case for many students and in many schools and is an added reason for seeking the introduction of second language learning in schools. For speakers of languages other than English, the teaching of their language at school is a public recognition of the value of their language and of its acceptability within Australian society. These children are encouraged by such action to develop their cultural identity and self esteem within both the family and the wider community. (Victorian State Board of Education, 1984:4)

> **Preserving Cultural Heritage and Identity**
> Language is the chief way in which cultural meanings are developed and transmitted; it is a symbol of cultural heritage and identity. It is therefore crucial to the identity and self-esteem of a group, a family and an individual. The inclusion of the study of a group's language in the school curriculum is recognition that the language and culture are worthwhile. (Queensland Multicultural Co-ordinating Committee, 1985:2)

> Language is not only an important means of generating expressing and transmitting cultural beliefs and practices. It is also a living part of any culture. Incorporating a group's language into the curriculum assists the retention of that group's identity, represents a judgment that language and culture are worthwhile and assists children from the linguistic background to feel more assured of their identity. (South Australian Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee, 1983b:5)

In some policies, such as the South Australian 1985 Languages Policy, it is argued that there is also a need to preserve ethnic languages in Australia (in particular 'those spoken by only a few' (Address by Mr. Lynn Arnold. SA Minister of Education, October, 1985) This argument (found elsewhere in policies relating to aboriginal languages) implies that teaching 'community languages' in schools will help to preserve languages which in Australia would otherwise die out, and that this is a socially valuable exercise.

A third argument is that the learning of languages other than English (whether they are the students' mother tongue or not) is considered to be a means of learning and appreciating other cultures. This argument has a more general scope in that it refers to the education of all children. Language teaching is considered to be a successful means of fostering inter-ethnic understanding. This view is found perhaps most consistently in the rationale given for

'language awareness' programs such as insertion classes or the language awareness programs specifically identified in the Queensland MCC policy. It is asserted for example that:

> * Languages provide a gateway to our diverse cultural heritage and introduce students to different ways of seeing and responding to aspects of the world.
>
> * Ability to use a community language gives an individual the ability to participate in and understand the social and cultural life of the associated community. (South Australian Department of Education, 1983:47)

Similarly:

> Learning a second language is a direct route to learning about a culture and is one of the most important ways of teaching people how to cope with differences. The aim is to develop knowledge of, and respect for, cultural differences. In learning a community language, students may also come to appreciate the linguistic skills of fellow students, relatives, neighbours and others in the community. In the longer term, children should come to develop positive attitudes towards the multicultural and multilingual nature of Australian society in which they are encouraged to learn and regularly use more than one language. (South Australian Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee, 1983b:5)

In the 1979 NSW Department of Education Policy, culture-through-language was a specific area of policy, but was abandoned to become an aspect of the general policy on community languages by the 1983 revision.

> The culture and language of an Australian ethnic group serve as the basis for interaction amongst its members. In many cases schools will have significant student population from various ethnic groups and requests may be made for the introduction of the languages of a school's community. When a language is introduced into the curriculum and a significant number of students studying it are native speakers of the language it is referred to as a community culture-through-language program. For this group the study of their own culture and language can enhance their ethnic identity, strengthen their ties with other members of their own family and their relations, and contribute to successful learning experiences at school. For students from other language backgrounds, eg whose mother tongue is English, the study of a community culture and language can be beneficial Students can gain an indepth insight into another part of the school community into one of Australian ethnic groups and by extension into the multicultural nature of Australian society. With opportunities to learn from peers, neighbours and other persons in the school's community the acquisition of both the culture and the language of one of Australia's ethnic groups can proceed concurrently (NSW Department of Education,

1979:8-9)

The three rationales for community language learning presented so far in this section are closely related. These are: community languages as means of fostering cultural pluralism; for maintaining ethnic languages and cultures; and for enhancing the sense of cultural and linguistic worth of community members. But there are four more areas of need for learning of languages other than English identified in the policies. These areas are oriented more to access to mainstream structures and social life than to the maintenance of differences. These are community language learning as a means of gaining employment, as an intellectual skill of general educational value, as a specific strategy in the cognitive development of students of non-English speaking background and as part of transitional bilingualism. We will go on now to discuss the meaning and implications of these four types of rationale.

It is argued that given the extent of non-English speaking immigration to Australia, there will be a continuing need for interpreting and translating services, bilingual community welfare workers, and so on. This can relate directly to the employment needs of students of non-English speaking background:

> Pupils enjoy the advantages of facility in more than one language in expanding their options for study, employment, travel and other leisure activities. (Queensland Department of Education, 1985:2)

A particularly comprehensive explanation of this argument is included in the Victorian Languages Policy.

> Viewed from a political economic perspective, many benefits arise from extending the range and teaching of language education in Victorian schools. Australian proximity to Asia and our growing political relationship with Asian nations together with the broadening of Australia's trading partnerships across the globe, are indicative of the wider direction in which Australia's international relationships have moved. For example Australian diplomatic missions are maintained in seventy-five countries.
>
> At a local level, Victoria's multilingual character (resulting from the fact that the majority of new settlers to Australia now come from non-English speaking countries) also necessitates the development of bilingual services in trade, tourism and commerce. The exchange of goods and services in Victoria thus involves the use of a range of languages. The vocational opportunities for children can therefore be widened by the

> acquisition of a language other than English (Victorian State Board of Education, 1985:4)

Fifth, in general educational terms, language learning is often regarded as involving the development of intellectual skills. This is the case whether the language is the student's mother tongue or not.

> The learning of a community language supports and in some instances is fundamental to the general language and cognitive development of children. Learning a community language supports rather than hinders the learning of English whether as a first or second language. (South Australian Department of Education, 1983:47)

> For those learning a second language, there is substantial evidence to support the view that language learning can enhance pupils intellectual and cognitive skills and improve understanding and competency in the mother tongue. (Queensland Department of Education, 1985:2)

> Recent studies strongly suggest that a high level of proficiency in two languages is very likely to have a positive influence on children's thinking and learning. It is agreed that such language proficiency may lead to a more flexible manipulation of the languages as children begin to employ language in new combinations and in new settings. The experience of more than one linguistic perspective develops divergent thinking skills in children, thus enabling them to develop a more flexible approach to thinking and learning. Associated with such flexibility is a growing awareness in children of the characteristics of language - its rules and conventions - and of the social and cultural context in which the language operates. Finally, access to two languages provides children with two ways of labelling the same object, an essential understanding that will enable children to differentiate between the sound of a word and its meaning. This is an important conceptual development. (Victorian State Board of Education, 1985:3-4)

Sixth, mother tongue maintenance specifically is also viewed as an integral aspect of linguistic-cognitive development.

> Education is a continuing process. If children are not enabled to continue to learn in the language they know, while acquiring adequate command of English, then their educational development is artificially disrupted and retarded. Children from non-English speaking backgrounds, if given the opportunity to work from their language strengths, may achieve higher academic standards than would be the case where they are always required to demonstrate their abilities in a second language. (South Australian Multicultural Education Co-ordinating Committee, 1983b:5)

> There is persuasive evidence in research studies which shows

> that the learning of a second language is enhanced where students have a sound knowledge of their first language and where the two languages are allowed to develop side by side, in a balanced way. This is pertinent to discussion concerning the effect which mother tongue maintenance may have on the learning of English by children from non-English speaking backgrounds. For effective second language learning to take place, it is desirable that a student's first language be allowed to develop to a satisfactory threshold level of competence. Thus, for children of non-English speaking backgrounds not only is it important that they be able to maintain their home language, but it is desirable that they also be allowed to develop that language to a level where the knowledge thus gained can be advantageous to their learning of English. (Victorian State Board Education, 1984:3)

There is a fair degree of agreement between the States on the policy rationale for learning community languages. Differences tend to be a matter of degree and emphasis rather than reflecting a contradictory approach.

However, the questions of the implementation of community language teaching, and the principles on which it should be based, receive more divergent treatment. In general, and in contrast to other areas within multicultural education (such as multicultural perspectives to the curriculum), the community languages policies contain little information on the specifics of how community language programs should be run. This is despite references in some policies, (for example, to the obvious logistic problems with the teaching of languages other than English given the number of 'community languages' that exist in most large cities, the range of competencies likely to be represented at any one school and the lack of suitably trained and qualified teachers. Policies tend to concentrate on arguing the benefits of Community Language teaching and leave the question of implementation either to other documents (such as the NSW administrative guidelines for community languages) or to Commonwealth/MECC funding guidelines, or to the schools themselves. Obviously, the practices in each state depend heavily on the availability of resources and there is explicit or tacit recognition of this fact in many documents. The absence of reference to specific program types can also be seen as symptomatic of the fact that the sources of such documents are typically located in positions marginal to the mainstream of education bureaucracies and are not in a position to plan resource-dependent matters with any confidence. The generality of statements such as the following from WA reflects this:

> Language is a basic element of culture and the encouragement of the teaching of community languages to all students in our

schools will enhance acceptance of the multicultural nature of our society.

One 'implementation' question on which the policy documents do frequently comment is that of the extent of community language teaching envisaged. Some States, (for example Tasmania, Victoria and South Australia), suggest that all students should learn or at least have exposure to a community language other than English. Others (such as the NSW policy which says that community languages should be 'developed for students according to interest and need') do not display such ambitious aims.

Vagueness about student target groups, which languages should be taught, the relationship between 'foreign' and 'community language' teaching, the place of ethnic schools and insertion classes, and organisational arrangements within the school for community language teaching, typify many documents. Different possible arrangements are often alluded to (for example NSW Community Language Support document), however, the educational benefits of one mode as opposed to another is less clearly spelt out. In many cases, (for example Queensland's Policy), decisions about which type of program to teach are treated as a matter of individual school choice.

Recently, however, this has begun to change. Some States have begun to specify implementation guidelines for community language teaching and to develop a language planning approach to the teaching of languages other than English. Perhaps the most comprehensive and certainly the best known example is the Victorian State Board of Education Report on 'The Place of Languages other than English in Victorian Schools' and the recent plan developed by a State Committee consisting of Departmental, State Board, MACMME representatives. The policy set a clear priority for language maintenance and nominates priority languages to be taught as well as dealing with the issues of

- teacher training
- professional development programs
- curriculum materials
- data collection, analysis and dissemination of information
- provision of consultancy services
- structural arrangements for program provision with particular regard to the problem of continuity between primary and secondary programs, isolated schools and dispersed language groups.

The Victorian policy also demands 'serious' language teaching and as a matter of policy it is stated that a language program requires a minimum of three and a half contact hours per week.

In South Australia too, specific plans for language teaching have been or are being developed in association with the publication of the 'Languages Policy' in 1985 which described general principles. Within the context of the Department of Education 'Ethnic Affairs Management Commitment', plans have been made for the ten year period 1985-6 to:

* 'produce a coherent curricular framework for the teaching, assessment and credentialling of school language programs R-12' (a project which is being jointly funded by the Commonwealth Curriculum Development Centre)
* research the need and most desirable structures for, and to establish a 'South Australian Secondary Modern Language Program' in out-of-school Governmental classes with an estimated capacity of 1500 students.
* to provide fully supported languages other than English programs in primary schools ultimately for all children; 20 additional teachers and new administrative and co-ordinating structures have been introduced in 1986 as a first step.
* An Institute of Languages has been established at the South Australian College of Advanced Education to support these initiatives, and other bodies, such as the Languages and Multicultural Centre, have also developed specific plans of action which detail activities related to the teaching of languages other than English.

The other State which has a large scale involvement in community languages, NSW, has not as yet developed any systematic plan for language teaching or for co-ordinating the current disparate activities of ethnic schools, the Saturday Schools, Commonwealth and State funded programs and language awareness or 'insertion' classes. The form and implementation of language learning classes in NSW remains largely dependent on the choices of each individual school.

Ethnic Schools

Ethnic schools have existed in Australia since the early 19th century. They are private schools run (in almost all cases) after normal school hours and teach language and culture to children of non-English speaking backgrounds. They are

ethnic specific and most students are native speakers; emphasis is placed in the schools on fostering ethnic cultural traditions and the students non-Anglo-Australian ethnic identity. While many schools are very old the number of schools increased dramatically in the 1970s and in 1983 Marlene Norst reported the existence of 1,045 ethnic schools involving more that 85,000 students. (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983). Some schools now also run so-called 'insertion classes' - language and cultural awareness classes conducted during the regular hours of the day-school for native and non-native speakers alike.

In 1981 the Commonwealth Government, following the recommendations of Galbally's multicultural program began funding ethnic schools on a per capita basis and this has continued to promote their growth, particularly the insertion-class component. The schools rely, however, on diverse sources of funding including that from overseas governments, ethnic community organisations and fees. State funding for the schools has a longer history than that of Commonwealth funding, although the sums provided in both cases are very small. (In 1986 the Commonwealth grant was $34 per student). The 1983 Survey found that while all States indicated support for ethnic schools and their place and role in the community. Four provided funding to them (Tasmania, N.S.W., victoria and S.A.) In 1985 W.A. has also begun funding ethnic schools In the Northern Territory ethnic schools may apply for an establishment grant. Arrangements for payments vary between teaching materials production and development, the purchase of educational materials and other general classroom resources.

In general State policies vary along a continuum in relation to the following aspects of policy.

i) encouraging ethnic schools as a way of making up for gaps and shortcomings in the public education system (this has been the consistent NSW State Government attitude towards insertion classes for example)

ii) a view that the quality and type of education provided by ethnic schools needs to be tightly monitored, controlled and improved. the variance here may be seen by the contrast between the South Australian position where 'expenditure can be on virtually anything including transportation of children (Memo to NACMME secretariat, SA Department of Education, 1986) and NSW's strict guidelines and scrutiny to ensure the use of grants by ethnic schools for the purposes of teacher and materials development activities.

iii) Support for the voluntary nature of the schools while in the NT, NSW and Victoria funds may not be spent on teacher salaries, in other states these are considered a legitimate item for Government support.

State policies towards ethnic schools are also reflected in the attitudes and responses of day schools to their activities. Ethnic School Liason Officers have been funded by the Commonwealth Government from 1981 in recognition of the need to improve contact between ethnic and day schools and encourage the exchange of materials and information between them. Lack of assistance from day schools and problems in using public facilities however, remain a concern of many ethnic schools. Marlene Norst reported in 1983 that a major 'expressed need' of ethnic schools was 'the development of an organisational framework to promote communication between the [day] schools and their communities and to assist them in matters of funding, equipment and premises' (Commonwealth Schools Commission, 1983,; 12)

The power of ethnic schools to gain the co-operation and recognition of the public school system has been in part determined by the strength of the school lobby, while peak representative ethnic schools bodies exist in most States, in some (e.g. S.A.), they are much stronger and better organised than in others. The degree of government support for these bodies also varies in S.A. the federation not only receives a Government grant but also benefits from the Government funding guidelines which allocate funds only to Federation members. The substantial and unenvisaged use of Commonwealth funds for insertion classes as opposed to ethnic schools in recent years has been a factor causing disunity and conflict within the ethnic school movement.

In summary, the main thrust of State initiatives towards ethnic schools in the eighty's has been to support qualitative improvements in the education supplied by ethnic schools by assisting with teacher training, curriculum development and the production of teaching materials.

Bilingual Education

As discussed above, transitional bilingual programs have been seen as a desirable means of meeting the language needs of non-English speaking students in the context of ESL policies. However, bilingual education is also dealt with

in the context of policies relating to the learning of community languages. On the one hand, there has been in some States a stress on teaching the content normally taught in English in the community language - a parallel development to the language-across-the-curriculum approach in ESL teaching. Both the NSW Department of Education community languages support document and a position paper by the South Australian MECC dealing with the teaching of community languages represent this emphasis. The target groups here are still primarily non-English speaking background teachers.

On the other hand bilingual teaching and bilingualism as a goal for English-speaking background students has emerged as an issue as in some recent language documents. In the Victorian documents, bilingualism (meaning a high level of proficiency in English and in a language other than English) is seen as the aim for as many students as possible and the teaching of subject content in the community language is envisaged (where possible) for both non-English speaking background and English speaking background students.

This type of bilingual education is best developed in most States in the private, rather than the State-run education system (for example the Greek primary schools in Sydney and Melbourne and the International School in Sydney where all subjects are taught in two languages throughout the school.) An example of public education involvement is the ACT French-Australian Binational school (mentioned in ACT School's Authority Multicultural Education policy).

Socio-Cultural Education

While some areas within multicultural education are aimed specifically at children of NESB (ESL for example), the socio-cultural area of multicultural education is for the most part aimed at all children. Multiculturalism is considered to be a prescriptive as well as a descriptive term; insofar as (it is argued) Australia is a multicultural society, education should reflect this by itself being permeated by a multicultural approach. It is advocated in almost all policies that 'multiculturalism should not be seen as a separate subject to be added to the curriculum; it should be a value/ethic/philosophy/plan of action that permeates or infuses the whole curriculum'. (Brentnall and Hodge, 1984:20) As they also note, this point is typically phrased in an exhortationary tone; and in language that is frequently vague and generalised. The idea of recognising cultural diversity whilst fostering harmony at the level of

individual and community interaction, and responding to students' ethnic identities are often promulgated; the meaning of terms such as 'culture' and 'ethnicity' are more often implicit than explicit in the statements.

An example is the well-known opening paragraph of the NSW Multicultural Education policy:

> Multicultural education is a combination of policies, programs and practices directed at ensuring that all schools recognise and accept the multicultural nature of Australian society and take positive steps to provide educational opportunities which will promote national unity through a deeper understanding of the cultural pluralism of our people ... .(NSW Department of Education, 1983:1)

The NSW Policy does give an outline of the general socio-cultural concepts that informs many other policies:

> **The Aims of Multicultural Education**
> The aims of multicultural education encompass the provision of educational experiences which will develop in all children:
> a) an understanding and appreciation that Australia has been multicultural in nature throughout its history, both before and after European colonisation;
> b) an awareness of the contribution which people of many different cultural backgrounds have made and are making to Australia;
> c) intercultural understanding through the consideration of attitudes, beliefs and values related to multiculturalism;
> d) behaviour that fosters interethnic harmony, and
> e) an enhanced sense of personal worth through an acceptance and appreciation not only of their Australian national identity but also of their specific Australian ethnic identity in the context of a multicultural society.
>
> These aims of multicultural education are considered appropriate for all schools in the State. They are as relevant to schools with small numbers of children from linguistic and cultural minorities as they are for schools where such children predominate.
>
> In meeting these aims it is essential that all schools and all school personnel facilitate intercultural understanding by ensuring that multiculturalism as a fundamental value permeates the total curriculum. All curriculum areas should reflect multicultural perspectives and all students should be exposed to these perspectives. (NSW Department of Education, 1983:2-3)

'Ethnic studies', 'education for intercultural understanding' and 'multicultural perspectives to the curriculum' are common sub-categories within multicultural education policy. Not all policies identify all areas - the SA 1984 document,

'Education for a Cultural Democracy', for example, puts a major emphasis on multicultural perspectives to the curriculum and the need to overcome the 'essentially monocultural approach' that is practised in most schools.(1984:19) Specific 'ethnic studies' receive no mention, and the promotion of ethnic community participation in the provision and planning of educational services is emphasised rather than combatting racism conceptually through subject content. Other policies, such as the NSW 1983 policy and Queensland's 'Education for a Multicultural Society' address and use the categories nominated above or ones similar to them.

'Ethnic studies', or 'specific cultural studies for and about different cultural groups' (Queensland Working Party on Multicultural Education, 1979:10) are considered to be important for two main reasons. The process of reinforcing cultural pluralism through ethnic studies is intended to be both for the benefit of members of each 'ethnic' group and in order to understand other 'ethnic' groups - that is for both affective and instructive reasons. In the NSW policy the purpose of ethnic studies is considered to fall within the realm of identity; every Australian is considered to have an 'ethnic' (cultural) identity; as well as a national identity and; 'Ethnic studies are concerned with both ethnic identity and Australian national identity (1983c:1) It is considered that people from minority ethnic groups have the right to respect for their culture and study of their different cultures in one way for schools to achieve this. For example, one means identified NT Department of Education policy is '(to encourage) children to understand the culture of their own background and its relevance to Australian society.' (NT Department Education N.D.: 1-2)

The following quote from Tasmania makes this point but also incorporates the other main rationale for ethnic studies: 'the belief that all Australians can benefit from the enrichment and diversity offered by a variety of cultures in our midst.' (Tasmanian Teachers Federation, 1983)

Taken narrowly, such approaches can concentrate on cultural symbols and aspects of culture such as leisure activities, food types and so on. A WA Department of Education discussion document, for example, identifies; 'special days and celebrations', 'European folk dances' and 'learning about traditional Aboriginal art' as examples of teaching approaches. A broader emphasis coincides with a move away from specific ethnic studies to a 'curriculum perspective' emphasis in other policies.

For example, Victorian Ministerial Paper 6, quoted in the Social Education P-12 Preliminary Statement states that programs should be devised that enable students to:

> understand the influence of gender, race, ethnicity, class and culture on contemporary Australian society. (1984:12)

This sets ethnicity in a broader social context in which symbols and the affective elements of social relations are related to social structures and issues of social equity. As noted above, in virtually all policies it is stated that the aims of multicultural education 'should be reflected in the whole curriculum from pre-school to year 12'. (NT Department of Education) However, consistent with the increased emphasis on 'mainstreaming' in ethnic affairs at the State and Federal levels, the study of ethnic groups approach is less prominant now than in the early days of multiculturalism.

The Western Australian Policy gives a specific example of how multicultural perspectives might be brought to particular curriculum areas.

> There are a number of components that can be included in a multicultural education program. Probably the highest priority should be given to activities that can be introduced into many of the traditional areas of the primary, secondary and technical curricula. These activities would include, where appropriate, the introduction of references to other countries and their customs and languages and especially those features that immigrants to Australia have maintained. They would also include activities about Aboriginal and mainstream Australian cultures. While much has already been done in this respect in social studies, activities to highlight cultural similarities and differences could also be introduced into art, physical education and home economics programs, to name only a few. In science, too, activities leading to an understanding of the contributions made by great scientists from many ethnic groups could be incorporated into existing subject matter.
>
> Schools and colleges are asked to develop programs that will make students aware of ethnic similarities and differences and to understand and appreciate them irrespective of ethnic origin. (1977:2)

The most recent state multicultural education policy is that produced in 1986 in Victoria. (At the time of writing the policy, 'Education in for a Multicultural Victoria', is still in draft form.) It exemplifies the mainstreaming trend in that the classic divisions of 'multicultural perspectives', 'community languages' intercultural education and so on. do not appear at all. Indeed a

major part of the policy is devoted to 'curriculum for a multicultural Victoria' and multicultural perspectives to schooling is given a sharper, more material and more comprehensive base of 'content, materials and teaching styles ... styles of communication, organisation and administration'. Multicultural education is explicitly defined, not as separate subject matter, but rather as a process of reflection and incorporation based on a critical understanding of the cultural aspects of the curriculum'. And it is seen to apply to the way subjects are taught (teacher attitudes and practices), school policies, relations to the local school community, as much as to the content of courses. With regard to content, stress is placed on what it considers to have been typically left out of curricula (e.g. matter relevant to the local school community, its relationship to contemporary Australian society), as much as on specific topics that need to be addressed. It is stated that there is a need for an 'inclusive' not 'exclusive' curriculum.

A final specific area identifiable within the socio-cultural dimension of multicultural education policies is that of inter-cultural understanding. Whilst in a broad sense, all of the above strategies are aimed at furthering intercultural communication, in some policies specific strategies focusing on improving group interaction and changing attitudes. It is considered that attitudes and structures of racism and prejudice can affect negatively students' experiences of school.

The New South Wales policy provides greatest detail although its sentiments are reflected in broad terms in other policies:

> Intercultural education is a process concerned with identifying the ethnic dimension to school life and developing skills and attitudes necessary to interact effectively in a multicultural society. This process of attitude and skill development has implications for education at a number of levels. Some issues will affect the entire school and will involve school management practices, e.g. cultural dimension to the school's discipline and pastoral care policy. Other issues will arise in individual classrooms, e.g. inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic peer group behaviour.
>
> Specific Aims:
> - To develop a school climate which promotes cohesion through the recognition and enhancement of the ethnic diversity of the school, community and nation.
> - To enhance self-esteem by recognising and promoting the ethnic identities of students, staff and community members.
> - To develop an awareness that individual, group and institutional practices reflect values, attitudes and beliefs.

- To develop a belief in the equal worth of ethnic identities.
- To develop skills of cultural interaction through an understanding of the significance of language and communication styles.
- To develop intercultural skills through an examination of one's own attitudes, values and beliefs and the attitudes, values and beliefs of others.
- To promote behaviour and foster inter-ethnic harmony and counters discriminatory behaviour based on ethnic differences. (NSW Department of Education, 1983d:1-2)

In Victoria, however, it seems that the question of racism is being tackled more directly, less through an enhancement of self-esteem and promotion of different identities than through practical strategies for identifying structural racism and programs for overcoming racism in more general attitudinal and curriculum areas. This is leading to a draft statement on racism in schools. Such processes are being implemented in part in a practical way through the Prejudice Project (Victorian Ministerial Advisory Committee on Multicultural Migrant Education, 1985:23-25)

In Conclusion

State level multicultural education policies have been marked by inconsistency of form and content, both in comparison between states and across time. Nevertheless, important consistencies and trends are worthy of note. Institutionally, the multicultural education movement developed as a result of initiatives from Canberra. The emergence of policy statements from the late 1970s was both a result of the practical necessity of administering tied Federal funding and was directly influenced by key statements such as the MacNamara Report. But this source of consistency was also a source of inconsistency insofar as there were no concrete expectations about policy formulation and practice.

Across all the policies, there has been a move towards concepts of mainstreaming: towards influencing mainstream teachers about the ESL needs of their NESB students; towards broadening the concept of community languages to encompass all teaching of languages other than English so they gain equal curricular importance; and towards multiculturalism as an ethic that crosses the school, combatting racism both at structural and attitudinal levels. But one senses very strongly from the equivocation of the policies and more clearly from observation and reports of practice that, despite the entreaties, the mainstream

has hardly been affected.

Mainstreaming, however, despite its plausible idealism, is a two-edged sword. Quoting a recent statement that will be all too relevant to our practice in the next few years,

> The Multicultural Education Program has an ambitious goal, to raise awareness of the multicultural character of the Australian community. The program has met some early objectives, and it is now time to ensure that teaching and learning about multi-culturalism are integrated into normal mainstream education programs.

Mainstreaming, indeed, is now a key word of policy and debate.

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